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Letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith information on further violations of international humanitarian law by Armenia in the context of the intensification of the armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan since 2 April 2016.

I would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

(*Signed*) Vaqif Sadiqov

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

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Annex to the letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

Comments dated 1 June 2016 by Hikmet Hajiyev, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in response to the media question on illegal economic activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

The Republic of Armenia bears the responsibility for unleashing the war and using force against Azerbaijan, occupying its territories, carrying out ethnic cleansing on a massive scale and committing other serious crimes. Armenia established subordinate separatist entity in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and other regions of Azerbaijan.

Despite the ongoing negotiations towards the solution of the conflict based on the principles of international law and the UN Security Council Resolutions 822(1993), 853(1993), 874(1993) and 884 (1993) the policy and practice of Armenia in the occupied territories, including installation of artificial settlements by transferring people from abroad into those areas, destruction of cultural heritage of Azerbaijani people and altering their origin, illegal commercial activities and preventing the Azerbaijani internally displaced population from returning to their homes testify to the intention of Armenia to secure the annexation of these territories.

The international law prohibits the acquisition of territory or altering the internationally recognized borders of States by use of force. Under the international law the situation created by a serious breach of peremptory norms of international law shall not be recognized as lawful. The Republic of Azerbaijan is the only country possessing the internationally recognized sovereignty over its occupied territories. Like any the military occupation, the occupation of Azerbaijan's territories is temporary as well.

In flagrant violation of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and sovereignty, it's appropriate laws and the norms and principles of international law, individuals or companies in transactions with Armenia, its organs, natural and legal persons as well as with its subordinate separatist regime in relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan run risk of facing appropriate legal proceedings, including in the form of administrative or criminal prosecution. Under international law such activities in the occupied territories may be qualified as war crimes that entail criminal liability.

Additionally, the natural and legal persons also in breach of corporate social responsibility and business ethics code, contribute to the continuation of Armenia's occupation against Azerbaijan and violation of fundamental rights, including rights of return and rights of property of million more Azerbaijani internally displaced persons who were subject of ethnic cleansing.

The General Prosecutor Office has filed a criminal case against Vartan Sirmakes, the national of Swiss Confederation, co-founder of "Franck Muller Group" and CEO for his illegal economic and other activities in the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by the armed forces of Armenia. In the meantime, the criminal proceedings have been taken in relation to German Sterligov, citizen of Russian Federation for his illegal actions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The necessary operative-investigative actions are being continued in this regard.

The illegal economic activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan are also put into the agenda of joint Governmental Commissions and are subject of discussions with the appropriate States.

In accordance with their obligations under the international law all States shall do all necessary to refrain their natural and legal persons from unlawful visits to and other activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and prohibit export of any products produced in these areas to their markets.

As a result of preventive actions and rising of awareness about legal consequences, the activities of many foreign companies have been ceased in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and other regions of Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan will continue to take all legal and political measures at the national and international levels to prevent such illegal activities in its occupied sovereign territories.